



Mental Health Update

June 16, 2006

FUTURES PROJECT

Futures: Burlington Outreach Plan

A draft plan for reaching out to the Burlington and greater Chittenden County communities was presented this week to Burlington city officials in advance of a meeting with Mayor Kiss, city department heads, and city counselors from Ward 1 on June 16th. The City welcomes a participatory role in strengthening the plan and providing input on a range of issues. The City has presented questions about the Futures Plan as it relates to the co-location of a primary program for inpatient psychiatric care on the Fletcher Allen campus. These concern design and development, public safety, community impact, governance, and broader questions about the mental health system. All of the questions will be answered in writing and additional meetings will be held with the Mayor and his administration.

Two public hearings are scheduled, the first on July 13th in Ward 1, and the second in South Burlington on July 20th. Interested members of the public will be invited to join a local task force to examine in detail the site options that have been explored for the program integrated with Fletcher Allen. The task force will be asked to complete the first phase of their work by the end of the summer but will be an ongoing part of the Burlington Futures planning process.

A Housing and Human Services Network Group has been organized to think through the issues associated with location of a new inpatient psychiatric program in Burlington. It begins meeting on June 27th and will focus on assessment of community impacts and strategies to mitigate them.

Following up on questions from the Neighborhood Planning Assembly (NPA) of Ward 1, the area of Burlington surrounding the Fletcher Allen campus, the Futures staff provided written responses in a Q&A format on the topics brought up by residents when AHS Secretary, Cynthia D. LaWare, and Project Director, Beth H. Tanzman, made a presentation on the Futures Plan in April. The Ward 1 NPA played an instrumental role in public review and input for Fletcher Allen's Renaissance Project several years ago and is expected to assume a similar role in working with the state, the City, and Fletcher Allen on planning for the new inpatient program in Burlington.

Futures: Upcoming Meetings

The Housing Development Work Group begins a series of meetings this summer and fall to work toward a recommendation(s) by October 30 on the housing priority of the Futures Plan. Ken Liberto, of the Vermont Association for Mental Health, will chair the group of housing specialists with the support of Brian Smith, the Division of Mental Health's housing expert, and Judy Rosenstreich, Futures staff. The work group meets on June 19th.

The Legislative Mental Health Oversight Committee will hear a full update on the Futures planning process on June 20. Items on the agenda include:

- steps taken on the CON process,
- the assessment of needed bed capacity in the actuarial study and responses to those recommendations from the Care Management Work Group and the Futures Advisory Committee,
- a progress report on the various work groups, and
- the state's collaborative planning with Fletcher Allen

The VSH Employees Work Group will begin to address requirements for success as the next step in the planning process for transition of VSH employees from the current state hospital to staff a new inpatient program. The Crisis Bed Development Work Group will meet at Home Intervention in Barre to see another example of a crisis bed program following their meeting at the ASSIST Program in Burlington. Both work groups will meet on June 21st.

VERMONT STATE HOSPITAL CENSUS

The Vermont State Hospital Census was 49 as of midnight Wednesday night. The average census for the past 45 days was 48.7.